

# Anyone

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Viva Mannerism for Architectures for Our Age

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# Viva Mannerism for Archi

Architecture as the Generic Building Adorned by Electronic Iconography:

- as generic form – not original form.
- as flexible loft – not unique masterpiece.
- that is good – not necessarily original.
- as shelter – not space.
- as ornamented shelter – not expressionist sculpture.
- that's generic with iconography on it – not sculptural with expression on it.
- whose radicalism may derive from meaning – not expression.
- for explicit meaning – not abstract expression.
- that includes, via multiple iconography – not excludes via minimalist abstraction.
- of ornament and information – not of minimalist abstraction.
- whose élan derives from iconographic fanfare – not from articulated form.
- for the Electronic Age – not the Industrial Age.
- of the Information Age – not an esoteric age.
- ornament as iconographic appliqué – not industrial rocaille.
- whose vocabulary acknowledges the commercial vernacular of today – not the industrial vernacular of yesterday.
- realism accommodating the Information Age – not abstraction prolonging the Cubist Style.
- that can be pragmatic and permissively vulgar – not idealistic and boringly pretentious.
- that can look unabashedly like buildings – not look fashionably like scrap yards.
- that's naughty – not nutty.
- that can maintain the familiar – not revive the new.
- that can celebrate the ordinary/everyday – not only the original/spectacular.
- that can make the everyday spectacular – not the spectacular everyday.
- where reference via the S-word (sign) is good – not taboo.
- where windows are OK – not disdained.
- whose aesthetic can be evolutionary – not only revolutionary.
- accommodating valid chaos – over ruthless unity.
- as a manifestation of complexity and contradiction – not as "Space," the vapid S-word.
- whose aesthetic acknowledges context – not imposes universality.
- that can embrace cultural pluralism – not reject McDonald's and Taoism.
- as a highfalutin craft – not a frozen theory.

# tectures for Our Age

- that is pragmatic – not ideological.
- that can be vividly and validly vulgar – rather than weakly and boringly tasteful.
- where form accommodates function – not follows function; that fits like a mitten – not a glove.
- whose exceptions prove the rule – not abolish the rules.
- whose inconsistencies are driven pragmatically – not expressively.
- whose walls are signs: as in Ancient Egyptian pylons adorned with hieroglyphics, Early Christian and Byzantine basilica interiors covered with mosaics, Gothic cathedral interiors sparkling via *vitraux*, Renaissance and Baroque facades adorned with Classical orders, and interiors with frescos and murals, all of whose content is ornamental *and* informational – whose walls are not disguised as transparent screens or metallic grills.
- as billboards for the equivalent of hieroglyphics, mosaics, stained glass, frescos, murals – not abstract walls without windows or glass walls for tasteful glowing.
- that can glitter – not glow.
- of electronic sparkle, subtle *and* bold, for our hype-sensibility – not electrical glow for a highfalutin sensibility.
- electronic sparkle engaging meaning – not electrical luminosity promoting expression.
- with moving pixels as electronic tesserae – not esoteric minimalist planes.
- that's anti-heroic – not heroic.
- where mess is more – not less is more.
- as rich mess – not vapid minimalism.
- whose aesthetic tension derives from validly modified order – not whose aesthetic spectacularity derives from order abrogated.
- where you break the order – not worship it, or defame it.
- where order is refined – rather than invented.
- like Michelangelo's: he didn't invent a new style but adapted an existing vocabulary and made it sublime.

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• Architecture that's in the end mannerist, whose valid and vital inconsistency creates aesthetic tension, and whose valid and vital ambiguity enhances aesthetic meaning:  
Viva mannerism!

–Robert Venturi  
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ROBERT VENTURI IS AN ARCHITECT WITH OVER 70 BUILT PROJECTS. EDUCATED AT PRINCETON AND THE AMERICAN ACADEMY IN ROME, HE HAS RECEIVED 300-PLUS AWARDS, INCLUDING THE PRITZKER PRIZE IN 1991.